

HAVE WE PLANTED ENOUGH OLIVE TREES?

The legend says, Noah sent a dove when the flood waters receded. The bird came back with an olive leaf, to show that the Biblical flood was over and that life had returned to Earth. Since times immemorial, dove are considered as symbol of love and renewal of life. The ancient Greeks believed that an olive branch meant abundance and drove the evil away. According to some others, an olive leaf signifies peace because olive trees, because of their slow growth, are not cultivated during war time and therefore considered as peace-time trees.

As we are battling against the COVID-19 pandemic, the term world peace should create a new dimension for all. Building resilience, helping each other to recover better and transforming our world into more sustainable, safer and healthier option must remain our core objective. The theme of this year's International Day of Peace is 'The road to a lasting peace; Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security'. World Peace Day also called as International day of Peace is a United Nations designated day which was first established in the year 1981. Celebrated worldwide, shaping peace together remains the common goal.

However, the efforts on World peace have suffered a series of setbacks during the last two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data

has revealed that between January 2020 and April 2021, pandemic-related violent incidents were recorded in at least 158 countries. These incidents ranged from individual attacks aimed at people of Asian descent, various forms of other abuse to anti-lockdown demonstrations that turned violent. In all, there were around 5,000 such incidents, according to the Global Peace Index 2021.

To rethink the nature of risk and to understand the multidimensional aspect behind the global crises like COVID-19 remains the need of the hour. Characterized by the increased uncertainty and rapid change, this threat requires new approaches along the human security lines as the fact is that other existential risks have still not gone away - such as climate change, geopolitical conflict and nuclear conflict.

Currently, despite billions of dollars being invested worldwide, vast resources are misallocated, wasted, or poorly sequenced. It thus becomes important that peace-building, development and humanitarian approaches deployed to address COVID-19 avoid the trap of only addressing the health crisis symptomatically but also understand the structural underpinnings of conflict exacerbation.

OFF 'D' CUFF The Dharm that protects

In the Mahabharat, when Draupadi took Bhishma to task on the infamous dice game, he responded: dharm is subtle and its ways hard to grasp. But what good are such intellectual complexities amidst the trials of our everyday lives?

Yudhishtir gave us a direct answer. Racked by thirst, when the Pandavas came upon a lake, a yaksh emerged and warned them that the right to drink from the lake had to be earned by answering riddles.

Impressed by Yudhishtir's interpretation of dharm, the yaksh revived all his four brothers.

As people debate how the next wave of the pandemic will be managed, the message of dharm is very clear. By looking to the collective good, we also look after ourselves. Bhishma was right. Sometimes, the subtleties of dharm can be overwhelming. But so was Yudhishtir; sometimes, it really is that simple. We can all do the right thing.

Aruna Narlikar

Let us sacrifice our today so that our children can have a better tomorrow.

- A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

EDITORIAL

Items to avoid for preventing cancer



DR VIKAS SHARMA

Carcinogen is any agent, chemical, physical or viral that causes cancer or increase the incidence of cancer and the process by which cancer develops in various tissues of the body is referred to as carcinogenesis. Cancer originates within a single cell and can be classified by the type of cell in which it originates or by the location of the cell. At present more than 100 types of cancer are known, the most commonly occurring ones are breast, cervical, central nervous system (CNS), colon, leukemia, liver, lung, oral, ovarian and prostate cancer. A number of factors are responsible for promoting cancer, viz; physical, chemical, lifestyle, dietary, pharmacological, reproductive and genetic factors, DNA/RNA viruses and infectious diseases. Among the risk factors, the use of tobacco (cigarette, cigar, pipe or smokeless tobacco), unhealthy diet (rich in fatty foods) and physical inactivity (leading to obesity) are more likely to increase a person's risk for cancer than the very low levels of pollutants in food, drinking water and air. Recent studies have shown that poor diet and not being active are the two key factors that can increase a person's cancer risk. Besides quitting smoking, healthy food choices with a focus on plant-based foods, healthy weight, physical activities are some of the most important things you can do to lower the risk of cancer. According to the World Cancer Research almost 20 per cent of all cancers diagnosed in America are related to physical inactivity, body fatness, excess alcohol consumption, poor nutrition and thus could be prevented:

1. Refined sugars & artificial sweeteners: Refined sugars are not only known to spike insulin levels, but also to be a preferable food for cancer cells, thus promoting their growth. This is a known fact that has been around for many years. It was in 1931 that the German Nobel laureate in medicine, Otto Warburg, first discovered that tumors and cancer cells depend on sweeteners high in fructose corn syrup (HFCS) because cancer cells can easily metabolize it. Instead of using refined sugar or artificial sweeteners you can try alternatives like honey, jaggery, blackstrap molasses, maple syrup or stevia leaves to sweeten any dish.

2. Processed meat: Processed meat includes bacon, hot dogs, sausages, bologna or pimento loaf. A study concluded by the University of Hawaii has shown that processed meats contain high levels of chemicals and preservatives including nitrates which improve taste but are well-known carcinogens.

Smoked meats are particularly unhealthy as the meat absorbs tar during the smoking process.

3. Farmed fish: Commercial fish farming involves raising an incredible number of fishes (such as salmon) in a crowded environment. More than 60 per cent of the salmon consumed in the United States comes from a farming operation where they treated with antibiotics, pesticides and the carcinogenic chemicals to try & control the bacteria, viral & parasitic outbreaks that results from cramming so many fishes in a small space. Farmed fish also don't have as much omega-3 as wild salmon. When buying salmon make sure, it is labeled as wild.

4. Pickled & smoked foods: These products typically contain preservatives such as nitrates which are intended to prolong shelf life. The additives used in processed foods can accumulate in your body over time. Eventually such toxins cause damage at the cellular levels and lead to diseases like cancer. When smoked foods are cooked at high temperatures the nitrates are converted to much dangerous nitrites. Try to avoid pickled and smoked foods as much as possible.

5. Hydrogenated oils: Hydrogenated oils are man made products whose chemi-

cal structure has been altered to increase shelf life. Chemicals are also used to hide the odor and improve the taste of the oil. Research has proved that hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oil present in industrial processed food double the risk of breast cancer. Instead of using hydrogenated oils, use extra virgin olive oil and extra virgin coconut oil / palm oil.

6. Potato chips: These fast food staples are fried in hydrogenated vegetable oil and then heavily salted. According to a study published in The New England Journal of Medicine, eating one ounce of potato chips a day can causes an average two pound weight gain in one year. Moreover, potato chips have abundant trans-fats which increases cholesterol level as well as sodium which raises blood pressure levels. Potato chips are fried at high temperature that also causes them to produce acrylamide, a known carcinogen also found in cigarettes. Instead of buying potato chips from the market make these at home using healthy oils like olive oil.

7. Microwave popcorn: Microwave popcorn is a convenient and relatively healthy snack but the bag it comes in is another story. Many microwave popcorn bags are linked with a chemical called perfluoroctanoic acid (PFOA). This toxin has been found to significantly raise the risk of breast, kidney, bladder, colorectal, prostate, lung, thyroid, leukemia and lymphoma cancers.

8. Refined white flour: When flour is refined, all nutritional value is removed and then it is bleached with chlorine gas to make it more appealing to consumers. The glycemic index for white flour is very high meaning it spikes your insulin level without providing nutritional fuel. Carbohydrates are converted to sugars by your body so excessive products that contain white flour can lead to increased insulin resistance. Instead of using refined white flour try some healthier options like whole wheat, almond, quinoa or barley flours.

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Great Dogra Ruler - Maharaja Hari Singh

■ VASUNDHRA

At the palace of Amar Mahal Jammu, Hari Singh was born on 23 September 1895 in a Dogra Rajput family as the only surviving son of Raja Amar Singh Janmawal, the brother of Maharaja Pratap Singh. Hari Singh was the heir to Jammu and Kashmir since the Maharaja had no issue. He ascended on the throne in 1925. The seal of Maharaja Hari Singh had a crown at the top. A Katar has been placed at the bottom of crown. Also, two Soldiers held the flags and the image of the Sun shows his Rajput lineage from Lord Surya, the Hindu Sun God. He was a great secularist and it has been told that during his ceremony of Raj Tilak, he announces that, "I am a Hindu but as a ruler over my people my religion is only justice". In 1915, after completing his studies he became the commander in chief of the state forces. He was the senior member of the state council in addition to being the commander in chief, in 1921. Being a senior member, he grabs the chance to set up their relations with the people and tried to understand their issues. He puts a lot of effort to resolve the shortage of food problem during a severe famine in the valley. A place in Kashmir popularly known as Gulmarg as well a lake named Nagan Lake both these two depicts like an English town in summer. He also introduced many laws for reforming and shaping the state. Let's elucidate the reforms done by Maharaja Hari Singh during his emperorship. Additionally, the proclamation was directed to be published in the Government Gazette Extraordinary and communicated to the Minister for Religious Institutions, as well as the Pujaris of Raghunath Temple in Srinagar and Jammu, so that the public was aware. The Priests of the Raghunath Temple protested strongly against this proclamation, resulting in the resignation of the head priest. He made efforts to discourage the Head Pujari from leaving, but he was adamant in his refusal to resign. The Maharaja accepted his resignation, but did not withdraw his proclamation, as he had been associated with the Dogra House for decades. Taking such a bold step towards emancipating Harijans was an unprecedented decision by Maharaja Hari Singh, earning him the distinction of being the first ruler in India to have done so.

The Maharaja Hari Singh recognized that these reforms had no impact on those without enough to eat. Therefore he provided economic support to the poor classes. Scholarships were awarded to their children and they were given preference in recruitment to various government agencies. Maharaja Hari Singh had earned immortality even if he had fought no other battle against untouchability than that. When the state legislatures began to emerge later, they reserved seats for their representatives. The true facts of Maharaja Hari Singh are only becoming apparent with time to the public. He was on a mission to transform his state into a welfare state. He was in fact a pioneer in many ways. He was a great warrior and a multi-faced personality. Waltraud Ernst, Biswamoy Pati threw several new insights and ways of looking at the social reforms in the princely states during the colonial era. He strictly prohibited Child-marriage, female infanticide and also permitted low caste people to enter the worship places. At the primary level, he made education compulsory for everyone.

In 1931, relations between Hindus and Muslims become worsened. On one side, lack of educational awareness among Muslims and economic inferiority towards the Hindus whereas another reason was rapidly increasing the idea of Muslim Nationalism as opposed to Indian Nationalism, because at that time Civil disobedience movement is also going on in the country. The hatred was at its peak that even tiny matter creates conflicts among people. Although the British announced that they do not intervene in internal matters but in reality, they are always trying to intervene at the regional level as well. In 1947, when Indians attain freedom from British, Jammu & Kashmir joined India. Although Jammu and Kashmir was a Muslim Majority state, but being the ruler of the state as well as being Hindu he wanted Kashmir to be connected with India. A tribal person from Pakistan named Pashtun invaded Kashmir and gave a tough defeat to his forces. At that time, Hari Singh was looking for help from Indians. The Governor-General of India at that time was Lord Mountbatten, who suggested Maharaja to accede India, and hence considered this emergency; the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession on 24th October 1947 & joined his whole princely states with India. No doubt various initiatives had been taken by all the rulers of the Dogra Dynasty, but Maharaja Hari Singh played a prominent role to develop the economic structure of the state. Various schools & colleges had been opened & primary education should be compulsory during their reign. Even a modernized judicial system was developed. Civil and criminal laws were formed like prohibiting Child-Marriage and opened places of worship to the low castes. There was progress in the field of communication & telegraphs and also at several places many post-offices had been set. Maharaja Hari Singh also introduces reforms like opening of Public Schools, colleges and also made wells for the untouchables in 1931. He also opened temples for the untouchables as mentioned above. He said that in 1940 that untouchability is an offence. He introduced two more social reforms one was prevention of smoking for underage and second was removal of legal incapacities on the marriage of Hindu widows. The most important thing that had far-reaching effects on the future history of the state was the birth of political parties and the growth of political consciousness in the state during this period. But even more necessary was the liberation of the country from the British Yoke in 1947, which ended all the dominance, autocracy in our nation. On 26th January 1957, the hereditary rule of the Hindu monarchy in the state was completed shattered by the Kashmir Constituent Assembly exactly after one hundred one years and ten years of establishment.

Police retirees-rarely accepted by society

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

As a 'Police veteran', it always baffled me why; the police fraternity after their retirement is pushed on the sidelines and not accepted by the society, even by the police department itself and by the governments also. My traverse into the dilemma concluded that a police retiree's acceptance in the society is completely rooted to his performance while in service and how much he has maintained the sanctity of motto 'To protect and to serve'.

Majority in the police force never thought to maintain the consistency in their mandated delivery but with the change of batons at different levels of supervision, they work according to the whims and wishes of the new boss. It is our bad luck that those who had remained as shining stars and apostles of the efficiency, honesty, and were icons who 'knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way' for improvement in police working and were guiding and warming light in police department, moved to silent zone after their retirement and expectations from such fraternity to work towards ushering in attitudinal change in working style of police did not move on. Police cannot be kept on a different and blank page than like almost all other departments having somewhere droplets of stigmatization. But the police are very visible in society and being guardians of law and having the responsibility of safeguarding the society is definitely the target of the society.

There are hundreds to thousands of police retirees in every state and are largely immobilized and appear to be in a state as they are paralyzed. It is indisputable that while in service, we do not realize that being a police officer is not just a job, it truly is a lifestyle. We are introduced to the people by our job more than us being a person. While in police service, we are supposed to hold higher standards than the rest of the public. Most retirees would probably love to contribute in meaningful ways in society. But the acceptance of a police retiree in the society is guaranteed only if our approach to the public had remained tolerable to the common man while in uniform and in authority.

YOUR COLUMN Encourage proper sitting posture

Dear Editor,

During COVID times, everything has changed. Our lifestyle, our study schedule, working schedule all have changed. Students are busy with online classes and are adopting the new normal slowly. But it is important that we should make sure that our children are comfortable and sitting in right position while attending online classes. Incorrect posture, while sitting in front of a computer for long can strain the eyes, neck and the back. It's not just the adults who are affected but kids, as young as 5 years are now complaining of back-pain and aches. Pre-teens and teenagers are being diagnosed with acute problems like spondylolisthesis. Doctors say that the problem can be aggravated by long hours of online schooling, improper sitting and lack of physical activity by children. Long screen time can impair your child's spine and lead to back stiffness, physical fatigue and other health problems. With some more time extended for online learning, it has become all the more imperative that good posture

and suitable learning environment must be crafted even at home. I would like to share few tips to make this easy for moms at home. A home desk should be patterned similar to that of a classroom. Do not encourage them to slouch, lie down and watch classes on their gadgets. Encourage them to maintain proper posture while they are sitting and studying at table.

Their feet should touch the ground, screen elevated at the right level so that they don't have to slouch and look straight ahead at the computer screen. If you have a child younger than 8 years, consider getting a special desk or chair which suits his structure and doesn't harm back. Too much of screen time is bad for their body as it can induce unnecessary stress on your eyes, neck and back muscles. Long hours sitting down can also turn your little ones physically inactive. A simple solution to this would be to tell them to take frequent breaks between classes. It could be a simple walk around the room or doing routine exercises which would stretch muscles and improve flexibility. As a rule, every individual should get up for 5-10 minutes every hour and take a short walk.

When we sit and focus on the laptop, we put a lot of stress on our lower back muscles and lumbar region. The extra stress is also one of the reasons why a lot of children tend to slouch or have bad posture,

which can end up causing problems later on. To fix this problem, try and support their lower back by rolling a comfortable pillow or towel at the back of the chair when they sit. It would make their desk a lot more comfortable. Moreover, do not encourage them to watch classes on the phone while lying on the couch. If possible, instruct children to attend classes and complete assignments on a computer unit, preferably affixed to a desk. Mobiles and tablets have a smaller screen, which is bad for their eyes. Kids who attend classes on phone are more likely to lean back on the couch, bed and be less attentive as well. Therefore, it's crucial you maintain a good study environment if you want their performance to match that of a classroom setting. It is also important to make sure that they get all necessary nutrients, vitamins and minerals needed for growing ages. A complete, healthy meal which contains a rich source of calcium, magnesium, Vitamin-B12 and D would help them strengthen muscles and bones, and may even combat the ill-effects of long hours of sitting and bad postural habits. By following these simple tips one can ensure that children have a good time while studying online without harming their body.

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